(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Open Series Maps (OSMs) will be freely available from the Survey of India to the public/private/non-governmental agencies for research, planning, infrastructure development, disaster mitigation and conservation of natural resources etc. after obtaining the one time clearance from the Ministry of Defence.

Policy on Biotechnology

1211. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that genetic experts and some of the members of the Expert Committee constituted to frame the policy on Biotechnology assailed the draft policy saying that it is for developing biotechnology and not using biotechnology for development;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government on this; and

(c) the genuine efforts Government are making or have made to elicit views from public and others on this proposed policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The Draft Biotech Strategy was placed on the departmental web site on 31st March 2005 and was open for comments up to 16th May 2005. More than 250 comments have been received from students; scientists from academia, research institutes and industry; policy makers; NGO's and international organizations. Consultations have also been held with representatives of NGO's, research scientists, academicians and other stake holders.

Central Electronics Limited

1212. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Electronics Limited is the largest manufacturer of Solar Photovoltaic products, among top producers of c.ystalline silicon solar cells/modules;

(b) if so, what are reasons for which it is incurring operating loss for the last three years; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that indigenous manufacturer of strategic item Phased Control Module has leading position in the area of Railway Electronics and Cathodic Protection System?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The major reasons for CEL incurring operating loss for the last three years are:

(i) Technological obsolescence of its professional ferrites plant and as a result loss of market (now this plant has been closed).

(ii) Abnormal delay in realization (as well as non realization) of sundry debts from various nodal agencies.

(iii) Due to cumulative heavy losses erosion in working capital.

However, the company has recorded an operating profit of around Rs. 4.00 Crore during the year 2004-05.

(c) CEL, the indigenous manufacturer of strategic item, Phased Control Module has around 80% market share in Railway Electronics products such as Axle Counter, Axle Counter Block Equipment and Train Actuated Warning Devices (TAWD).

In Cathodic Protection Systems, CEL's market share is around 6 to 7 per cent.

Soft loans by CSIR

1213. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CSIR is providing Soft Loans for Research and Development under various Schemes; and

(b) if so, Schemes formulated so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) CSIR is implementing a national scheme entitled New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative (NMITLI). The objective of the NMITLI is to catalyze innovation centered scientific and technological developments as a vehicle to attain for Indian industry a global leadership position, in selected niche areas in a true 'Team India' Spirit, by synergising the best competencies of publicly funded R & D institutions, academia and private industry. The scheme is the largest public-private-partnership R&D effort